

## HELLO AGAIN

VOL 18 NO. 4

JUL-AUG 1987

### A PERSONAL NOTE:

NETWORK RADIO LOG: ANOTHER MAJOR LOG REVISION is finished. Details on flyer enclosed last issue. Cost for this Network Log (1600 shows) is \$18... The first supplement is also ready from information just gathered from Variety Radio Directory, first 3 volumes, 1936-39. This will be sent at no cost to those who bought the main log and will be included with the main log to new purchasers...This log is completely different from the Circulating Show Log I wrote a year ago. This Network log shows broadcast dates, sponsors, network, day and time of over 1600 network shows from 1930-today.

CONVENTION '87: All details are on the enclosed flyer. Additional guests coming are JAY MEREDITH (FITTS) (The Brighter Day, The Mighty Show); CHUCK VERRAL (writer) Mandrake, the Magician; JOSEPH NATHAN KANE (writer) Break the Bank, 46 books; LEO ROSENBERG (Newscaster) KDKA; JEAN FRANCIS WEBB (writer) Nick Carter; GIL MACK (Thin Man, Chick Carter); Joyce Randolph (tv-Honeymooners)... Charles Stumpf will have Heavenly Days for sale at the convention for \$11 (25% off).

RADIO IS ALIVE AND WELL: Radio Movies, a monthly entertainment series described as movies of the mind, was test run on 12 NPR stations in June. It will be offered in October to all 338 NPR stations. It was originally offered as a 13-part pilot series over WGBH-FM in Boston. Host is David Ossman...CHARLES MICHELSON is marking his 50th anniversary as a radio program syndicator. Robert and Steve, Charles' two sons, were added to the staff. The company is also involving itself in custom tv commercials, videographics and sales videos. Also the company has signed a deal with MCA Entertainment to renew syndication of the original Dragnet series...BETTY WRAGGE was the subject of a lengthy article in Manhattan Plaza News, Feb 1987. She gives a nice plug to the Friends of Old-time Radio...ONCE UPON A RADIO is a cabaret act now playing Thursdays, 9pm at the 5 and 10 Restaurant, 77 Greene St, NYC 10012...ROSA RIO is giving a pipe-organ concert at Shelton High School, Shelton, CT on Saturday, Oct 17th, 8pm...The GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO on WBAI-FM (99.5), NYC is now on Sundays: 10:30pm-12:30am. It is still hosted by Max Schmid.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED: SPERDVAC RADIOGRAM, May; articles on Phil Cohan, John Conte, audio recording in broadcasting...July; articles about Marty Hill, Berry Kroeger...NARA NEWS, Vol 15 No. 1; articles on Jack Benny, stamp collecting and radio, Lum and Abner.. OLD TIME RADIO DIGEST, May-Jun, articles on Hindenburg Broadcast, YTJD. Also Bob and George are selling, for \$89, a cathedral radio with cassette player (about 12" by 12"). 3 hours of old-time radio shows are also included. Write to Royal Promotions, 4114 Montgomery Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45212...TAPE SQUEAL, Jul-Aug; article on John T Mullin who brought in the 2 first tape recorders into this country from Germany in 1946. The 2 machines and 50 reels of tape were first used with Bing Crosby's Philco Radio Show, 1947-48 season...NOSTALGIA DIGEST, Aug-Sep; articles on Bill Stern and Kay Kyser...ILLUSTRATED PRESS, Jul; article on the Hindenburg...

{ } If box is checked, \$10 is due for another year



BOOKS and MAGAZINES: HEAVENLY DAYS by Charles Stumpf and Tom Price. Its 330 pages covers virtually everything about Fibber McGee and Molly. Send \$16.95 (includes postage) to World of Yesterday, Rt 3 Box 263-H, Waynesville, NC 28786...KILLER AT THE WHEEL by Carlton E Morse. An exciting newspaper story taking place in the 40's. Send \$18.45 (includes postage) to Seven Stones Press, Star Route Box 50, Woodside, CA 94062.

AFTRA: Their 50th anniversary issue is out with articles by Norman Corwin, Hugh Downs, Jackson Beck, Ken Roberts, Del Sharbutt; also an AFTRA Crossword Puzzle by Arnold Moss...The article by Jackson Beck is reprinted.

NEW SHOWS: HENRY KJELLANDER, Box 1042, Latexo, TX 75849 is offering 12 cassettes (24 shows) of Saturday at the Shamrock. From 7/16/49-6/6/53 it was the only network show broadcast from Texas. It was a music and variety show with many well-known guest stars. Cassettes are \$9.95 each. The complete cassette album is \$99.00

CATALOGUES: Latest supplement from Bob Burnham (BRC), Box 39522, Redford, MI 48239; includes many Columbia Workshop, Mr. President, Jack Benny, Dragnet, X Minus 1.

LOGS: I still have copies of my log of Circulating Shows (\$17) and its 22-page supplement (\$8). Both for \$23. Supplement #2 and/or #3 available for a SASE. If you want Bob Burnham's "Listening Guide to Classic Radio Programs" also, all three may be purchased from me for \$33. (Guide alone is \$14.95)...

DO YOU REMEMBER? Credits for guests coming to our 12th convention are enclosed as noted in Variety Radio Directory, 1938-39.

NEW ADDRESSES: DEBBIE PIROCH, RD #4 Box 234, Meadville, PA 16335.. DAVID SHAPIRO, 484 Hammond Dr, Griffin, GA 30223...JOE WEBB, Box 58, Commack, NY 11725...BOB SIMPSON (NARA NEWS editor), 4565 SE 57th Ln, Ocala, FL 32671...PHIL SCOTT, 145 Oak View Dr SE, Leesburg, VA 22075.

NEW FRIENDS AND RETURNEES: WILLIAM WOODS, 283 81st St, Brooklyn, NY 11209...JIM CHRISTIAN, 4125 Arizona AV, Atascadero, CA 93422 is selling his collection of 900 cassette tapes of OTR shows for less than \$3 each to cover the cost of the tape. Send for a list of the shows...TERRY PORTER, 1834 So. Irvington, Tulsa, OK 74112; mostly interested in The Green Hornet and The Shadow...DOUG McCLELLAND, 704 Madison Ave, Bradley Beach, NJ 07720 looking for any shows with Eleanor Parker for a book he is writing...JERRY STRAND, 3262 W Lincoln Ave, Anaheim, CA 92801...GENE McKENZIE, Box 2902, Jackson, TN 38302 interested in OMF, ILAM, Lum and Abner...A J AFENDAU LIS, 1099 Drexel Rd, Muskegon, MI 49441...MIKE OGDEN, Box 4301, Tallahassee, FL 32315...JO ANNE VERIGIN, Box 138, Escalon, CA 95320...H K Hinkley, 1427 W American, Freeport, IL 61032...ROBERT WALSH, RD2 Box 46P, Downs Rd, Monticello, NY 12701...HARVEY HOUSE, 507 SW 4th St, Abilene, KS 67410...DON MOORE, 4120 Hawthorne Ln, Ft Worth, TX 76137...STANLEY STEINBERG, 5147 Thunderhill Rd, Columbia, MD 21045.

OLD FRIENDS: JIM ALBERT, 2732-H Queensboro Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15226; (412) 343-5235 has free catalog of programs and rare big bands and vocalists on cassettes. Jim will send a free cassette to all who request his catalog. ..LORA PALMER, 176 Atwater St, West Haven, CT 06516 wants any shows with the



Boswell Sisters. She will buy or trade for the show(s) on cassette only. A former instructor of Lora's is related to the family...J R COOPRIDER writes that Welbilt Radio Replicas have a 1930's cathedral-type AM-FM radio with cassette player inside for about \$90 from Designed for Living Company, 400 So. Dean St, Englewood, NJ 07631...FRANK TOMASELLI, 29-10 Donna Ct, Staten Island, NY 10314 still looking for ILAM from 1939-44 and Town Hall Tonight.. DEBBIE PIROCH, %Summet Housing Office, Box 113, Conaty Hall, Catholic Univ., Washington, DC 20064 wants any shows featuring Jeanette MacDonald and/or Nelson Eddy...NICK WILLIAMS, 6054 Wooten Dr, Falls Church, VA 22044 wants any info and tapes of ILAM including clippings and photos...BILL BROOKS, 3061 NE 92nd St, Seattle, WA 98115 is looking for the other 7 copies of Somebody Knows, a summer replacement for Suspense in 1950. He got the first one from Jack Johnstone who did the series and wants to give Jack the other 7.

IN FOND MEMORY: WYNNE GIBSON, May 15, 82; film, stage and radio actress (Thanks for Tomorrow; When a Girl Marries)...FRANK TELFORD, May 19, 72; radio and television producer, director and writer (Mystery Theater; The Whistler)...SAMMY KAYE, Jun 9, 77; popular band leader on radio from 1937-1956...ELIZABETH MORGAN, May 31, 84; actress in many areas and AFTRA board member. Miss Morgan attended our 1982 convention. Some of her radio shows were Stella Dallas, Campbell Playhouse, When a Girl Marries...ROY WINSOR, May 31, 75; tv and radio writer-producer-director (Sky King, True Confessions, Ma Perkins)...FRED ASTAIRE, Jun 23, 88. Was on radio for Packard from 1936-37...JACKIE GLEASON, Jun 24, 71; Was on radio with Les Tremayne in a show called Double Feature in 1944...STAN LOMAX, Jun 26, 88; Sportscaster on WOR-Mutual from 1935-1977...JOSEPH BOLAND, Jun 21, 83; Actor (Abies Irish Rose)...HOWARD TEICHMANN, Jul 7, 71; writer for stage, tv and radio (Valiant Lady, Road of Life)...BARBARA CHAIN, Jul 5, 66; radio and tv writer (Stars Over Hollywood)

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JAY HICKERSON, Box 4321, Hamden, Ct 06514 (203) 248-2887 \$10/year



**ANSELO, GEORGE.** Announcer. (R) Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, 1936-38 (Hill's Cold Tablets and Old English Floor Wax, NBC Red); Winchell Column Quiz, summer of 1938 (Andrew Jergens Co., NBC Blue); Young Widder Brown, 1938-39 (Cal-Aspirin and Haley's M-O, NBC Red); others.

**BECK, JACKSON.** Actor, announcer. (R) Myrt & Marge, 1937 (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet for Super Suds, CBS); Easy Aces, 1937 (Anacin, NBC Blue); We, the People, 1937 (General Foods for Sanka Coffee, CBS); Twenty Years Ago Today, 1937 (Hearns Dept. Store, Mutual); Believe It or Not, 1938 (Post Bran Flakes, NBC Red); Headlines, 1938 (Muriel Cigars, Mutual); Life of Mary Sothorn, 1938 (Lehn & Fink for Hinds Honey and Almond Cream, CBS); By Popular Demand, 1938 (Modern Age Books, CBS).

**BYRON, WARD.** Writer, producer. (R) Dr. Kate, 1936 (Best Foods, NBC Pacific Coast); Meredith Willson's House of Melody, (NBC Pacific Coast); Eddy Duchin's Orchestra, 1937 (Elizabeth Arden, NBC Blue); dramatic sketches for Your Hollywood Parade, 1938 (American Tobacco, NBC Red); Fitch Bandwagon, 1938-39 (F. W. Fitch Co. for Shampoo, NBC Red). (V) Appearances with George Jessel, 1938.

**CARLON, FRANCES.** Actress. (R) Attorney-at-Law (S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc., NBC Blue); Story of Mary Marlin (Procter & Gamble, NBC Blue); Kitty Keene, Inc. (Procter & Gamble, CBS). (F) Fox. (L) Stock.

**FILLBRANDT, LAURETTE.** Actress. (R) A Tale of Today, 1935-39 (Princess Pat, Ltd., NBC Red); Dan Harding's Wife, 1935-38 (sponsored by National Biscuit, 1938, NBC Red).

**HERLIHY, EDWARD J.** Announcer. (R) Melody Puzzles, 1938 (American Tobacco for Lucky Strike Cigarettes, NBC Blue); Larry Clinton's Campus Club, 1938 (Victor, NBC Blue); Grand Central Station, 1938 (Lambert Pharmacal Co., NBC Blue); Esso News, 1938 (Esso Gasoline, NBC Blue); Jack Berch, The Serenader, 1939 (Manhattan Sings, NBC Red). (NBC staff announcer).

**JENSON, RAYMOND.** Actor. (R) A Tale of Today, 1936-38 (Princess Pat, Ltd., NBC Red); Girl Alone, 1936-38 (Kellogg Co., NBC Red); Today's Children, 1936-38 (Pillsbury Flour Mills, NBC Red); Grand Hotel and The First Nighter, 1936-38 (Campana Sales, NBC Blue, NBC Red); Gauding Light, 1937-39 (Procter & Gamble, NBC Red); Public Hero No. 1, 1938 (Falstaff Brewing, NBC Red); Win the Lady, summer, 1938 (Jergens-Woodbury Sales, NBC Blue); Your Family and Mine, 1938-39. (Sealtest, NBC Blue); Valiant Lady, 1938-39 (General Mills, NBC Red and Blue). (L) Lay Windermere's Fan, 1931; Pygmalion, 1932; Three Sisters, 1932; Macbeth, 1933; At Mrs. Beams, 1933; There's Always Juliet (road), 1935; Hay Fever (road), 1935 (s).

**KENT, ELAINE.** Ingenue (emotional, comedy). (R) John's Other Wife, 1938-39 (Louis Philippe, Edna Wallace Hopper, Old English Wax, BiSoDol, NBC Red); County Seat (sustaining, CBS). (L) Reinhardt's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream; stock.

**LEE, MADALINE.** Actress. (R) Convive Blue in Amos 'n' Andy show since Nov. 23, 1937 (Pepsodent Co. to Dec. 1937, Campbell Soup Co. since Jan. 1938; NBC Red up to April, 1938, when it shifted to CBS).

**MEISER, EDITH.** Writer, actress. (R) Scripts for Sherlock Holmes; The New Penny (with Helen Hayes), 1935-36; The Amateur Gentleman (Leslie Howard), 1935; sketches for Roland Young, Lionel Barrymore, Miriam Hopkins; The Life and Love of Dr. Susan, 1939 (Lever Bros. for Lux, CBS). (L) Stock; Three Garrick Gaieties; others. (V) 1927-28. (Partner, Edith Meiser & Thomas H. McKnight, radio productions).

**OSGOOD, RICHARD E.** Actor, commentator, writer, producer, WXYZ, Detroit. (R) Also WSPD, Toledo; WGAR, Cleveland; WHPC, Canton; WKBN, Youngstown; Michigan Radio Network; WOR, NRC, CBS. (F) Paramount (f); shorts. (L) Productions by Henry W. Savage, George Tyler, A. H. Woods, John Golden, Jed Harris, Arthur Hopkins, and others.

**ROBINSON, ADELE.** Actress. (R) Buck Rogers in the 25th Century, 1932-36 (Cream of Wheat Corp., CBS); Ray Noble and His Dance Orchestra, 1935 (Coty, Inc., NBC Red); The Gibson Family, 1936-37 (Procter & Gamble, NBC Red); On Broadway, 1937 to March, 1938 (General Foods for Diamond Crystal Salt, NBC Blue); John's Other Wife, 1937-39 (Louis Philippe, Edna Wallace Hopper, NBC Red); others, not current. (L) Productions by William Brady, George Tyler, Crosby Gaige, Theatre Guild and others (f).

**STONE, SIDNEY.** Actor. (R) Famous Jury Trials (Mennen Co., Mutual).

**\*STONE, EZRA.** Actor. (R) Kate Smith's Hour (as member of the Aldrich Family) (General Foods, CBS); Aldrich Family, summer 1939 (General Foods, NBC Red). (L) What a Life; summer stock, 1938.

**KANE, JOSEPH N.** Interviewer. (R) Famous First Facts, 1938-39 (sustaining, Mutual). (Editor, correspondent; author of Famous First Facts, More First Facts, 1,000 Facts Worth Knowing, and others).

**V TREMAYNE, LESTER.** Dramatic actor. (R) First Nighter, since 1936 (Campana Sales for Italian Balm, NBC Red 1936-38; CBS, 1938-39); Burns & Allen, 1936 (Campbell Soup Co., CBS); Sears, Then and Now, 1936 (Sears, Roebuck, CBS); Grand Hotel, 1936-37 (Campana Sales, NBC Red); Betty & Bob, 1938-39 (General Mills, NBC Red and Blue); numerous other network shows, not current, include National Barn Dance (Miles Laboratories for Alka-Seltzer, NBC Blue); Edgar Guest in Welcome Valley (Household Finance, NBC Blue); Amos 'n' Andy (Pepsodent Co., NBC Red); Jack Armstrong (General Mills, CBS); Romance of Helen Trent (American Home Products, CBS); also many transcriptions. (LS) WMAQ, WENR, WGN, WLS, WBBM, WCFL and WSBC, Chicago; WROK, Rockford; KMOX, St. Louis; KYW, Philadelphia; WTMJ, Milwaukee, and others. (F) Shorts. (L) Gates of Paradise, 1932; The Messiah, 1933 (s); others. (V) WLS Road Show Hall; theatre appearances.

**VONN, VYOLA.** Singer, actress. (R) Texaco Town, 1937-38 (Texas Co. for

Texaco Gasoline, CBS). (GA) Kellogg program, 1936; others. (F) Shorts. (L) Take a Chance (western company), 1934. (V) Kewpie Twins.

**WEIST, DWIGHT.** Actor. (R) Cavalcade of America (E. I. du Pont de Nemours Co., CBS); Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra (Brown & Williamson Tobacco Co., NBC Blue); Just Plain Bill and Nancy (American Home Products Corp., NBC Red); Baker's Broadcast (Standard Brands, Inc., NBC Blue); Shell Chateau (Shell Union Oil Corp., NBC Red); News of Youth (Ward Baking Co., CBS); March of Time (Serval, Inc., Time, Inc., NBC Blue); Eddy Duchin & His Orchestra (American Cigarette & Cigar Co. for Pall Mall, NBC Red). (L) Stock.

**WRAGGE, ELIZABETH.** Dramatic actress. (R) Red Davis, 1933-35 (Beech-Nut Packing Co., NBC Blue); True Story Court of Human Relations, 1933-38 (Macfadden Publications, NBC Red); Pepper Young's Family, 1935-39 (Procter & Gamble, NBC Red and Blue); other NBC programs since 1928. (L) Betsey (Ziegfeld); Mima (David Belasco); My Maryland (Shubert); The Roof (Charles Hopkins); Dead End (Norman Bel Geddes); others (f).

**\*MEREDITH, JAY.** (R) The Mighty Sound, 1938-39 (Penick & Ford, CBS).

**MACK, GILBERT.** Actor, dialectician. (R) Gang Busters, 1937 (Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., CBS); Terry and the Pirates, 1938 (Boweys, Inc., NBC Red); Kate Smith's Bandwagon, 1938 (General Foods Corp., CBS); Dick Tracy, 1938-39 (Quaker Oats Co., NBC Red). (LS) WEAF, WMCA, WOR, New York. (F) Shorts (Biograph). (V) Songster Boys, Gobs of Joy, Collegians, 1930-35. Currently with WHN, New York.



# Radio Days

by Jackson Beck



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*Some New York radio actors with heavy bookings had ambulances waiting to rush them from one broadcast to another.*

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**A**s a kid I was always performing, so when a famous actor named Jack Norton said, "You know, kid, you ought to turn pro," that was all I needed.

I always listened to the radio, thinking, "Gee I can do that." One day I read an ad in the newspaper that said, "You, too, can be a radio actor." So I answered it, auditioning for two guys in the Bond Building in Times Square who told me I was good but needed lessons: I should go to a school around the corner, it would cost \$50. "Buddy," I said, "if I had 50 bucks I wouldn't be here." I offered to let them manage me for 20% instead of 10% if they'd forego the tuition. They said, no, I'd have to study at the school, which consisted of a studio, a microphone and lots of sadsack people.

Since I had no money, they made me an instructor working on commission. After two weeks I got disgusted, but the experience gave me an idea of where to go and I ended up at WINS on 58th Street, where I made friends with some of the announcers and the producer, who started using me for \$2 a show. This was in 1934 when New York had 27 radio stations. Eventually I worked at all of them.

I was the first to use the file card and a map for job hunting. I'd go from 57th Street where the ad agencies, recording studios and producers were located, down to 38th Street where there were more ad agencies. It took about ten days to complete the circuit. I walked the route

religiously until people in the offices got to know and hire me.

The first network show I did was *Death Valley Days* on NBC. All the actors had to dress formally. The audience of 300 was also in black-tie and was seated in the same room as the actors, separated by no more than ten feet. Audiences in those days were absolutely quiet. They would never think of behaving any differently in a radio studio than at the opera or the theatre.

If we had two shows close together and couldn't make both rehearsal schedules, we paid someone to be our stand-in right up to dress rehearsal. I always had a cab waiting for me, but some actors used ambulances because they got through traffic better; also, we would tip the elevator starters at the stations on a weekly basis to be sure an elevator was always waiting for us.

Actors learned to "play" a mike. If I was doing a deep voice, for example, I would move close; if I was doing a high voice, I moved away. You had to know where the mike's magnetic field was and how to use it. Sometimes I played five characters on one show.

Today when you go into a studio to record, there's no one there except you, the engineer and someone from the agency. In those days, there was the director, secretary, assistant director — all with stop watches, red pencils and

clipboards — plus four people from the agency and two from the sponsor. There could be as many as 15 useless people in the control room.

But the shows were meticulously produced. Most had live music — organ or orchestra. *Man Behind the Gun*, an hour show, had two days of rehearsal, 17 sound tables and the Columbia Orchestra.

Most of us did every dialect known to man. When you walked into a studio you never knew who you were going to play, but as soon as you saw the script you got a clue to your character: the heroine was Mary Noble, the villain was Mr. Blackwood, and Mr. Gray was neutral.

Also, we never knew how much we would get paid. I did 15-minute shows that paid \$15, and others that paid \$20.

One agency created a factory of soap operas and continued stories, and produced them on an assembly line basis. You went in for two hours and walked out with \$11.88 after taxes — unless you played the lead. The "queen of the hill" at that time was Bess Johnson who got \$1,750 a week — a huge sum in those days. Women got most of the soap opera money because the heroine was always the heart of the show and the leads were actors from the theatre who had agents to negotiate for them.

About this time, Equity decided we should be unionized and we decided we wanted to be. We were proselytized primarily by Equity actors who were doing some radio work. The real thrust came from the stars, all of whom were accustomed to being in a union.

I was very independent, and I fought the union. I really thought I could manage for myself. Then I met George Heller and became a convert. George was a fantastic man. AFRA wouldn't have happened without him.

When we started to organize the American Federation of Radio Artists I was completely gung-ho — and have been ever since.

Our first negotiation and settlement was with CBS, which always was a classy network. CBS was in favor of the union because it did what a union always does: it took a chaotic business and stabilized it. It meant that the shows and the actors would no longer be competing unfairly with each other and it gave the producers the means to help them better calculate their costs. ☆

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*Jackson Beck grew up in New York City. His father was an actor in silent pictures and Jackson was not to be discouraged. Jackson's career as an announcer, actor, spokesperson spans five decades, and his credits defy listing: "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's Superman!" was one of millions of lines he convincingly delivered. Mr. Beck portrayed Joseph Stalin — and everybody else — on The March of Time, had leading roles on literally scores of popular shows. Today Mr. Beck is a leading spokesman and narrator, a member of AFTRA's National Board and New York Local Board, former National First Vice President, and New York Local President, winner of the AFTRA George Heller Memorial Gold Card Award in 1980.*